



Once more time, Wormhole roamed through the Net, and distracted the AIs lurking there in order to extract precious data from secret forts, appearing to the simple minded as garbage. Using state-of-the-art viruses, our favorite wired friend managed to "garbage out" another gem from the long dead game. But weefles should know better than that: death means nothing in virtual world, there is no aging there!

This time, we have a Silent Impact card from Runner side, beautifully illustrated by Debbie Hughes ([Precision Bribery](#), [Identity Donor](#), just to mention two powerful cards by the same artist). Unfortunately some minor information is missing (card number in the set, rarity). As we release it as a standalone card, it is considered as "promo", similarly to Protected Resources.

Now, after a short analysis, let's have a look on this card:

-----  
 Phone Freak  
 Resource-Connection  
 0

Put 3 from the bank on Phone Phreak when it is installed. Use these bits only to pay for increasing your link. If you use any of these bits, replace them from the bank at the start of your next turn.

-----  
 Speaking of Debbie Hughes, the first thing that came to my mind was to compare it to [Wired Switchboard](#): same artist, similar effect (equivalent increase of link). What you lose in surprise (the switchboard is "hidden"), you gain in sustainability (our freak is not trashed).

Phone Freak will be then obviously used for two purposes. The first one is to benefit from a permanent link bonus, giving the Runner (once a turn, as the money can only be spent once per turn) an equivalent starting link of 3.

The second one is to put pressure on the Corp player, by announcing it that any trace will cost him/her at least 3 bits to get something. This second effect is even better, since Netrunner is highly psychological, and gaining psychological advantage is key to victory.

Furthermore, Phone Freak is not costless and not unique, which means that, considering the significant link bonus, two copies of the card will make any Runner very resistant to traces. In a run, it could even save the Runner's brain, by fighting more efficiently a nasty tracing ice ([Homewrecker](#)). In fact, some players would even think that it could endanger the balance of the trace side of the game, but we can suppose that Silent Impact contain Corp cards that help optimizing traces; and if not in Silent Impact, my expansions do; and you can read also below...

Combined with [Wired Switchboard](#) (or even better with [Bakdoor](#), with the corrected cost of 0 instead of 2), the card allows Runner to get rid of any single trace risk. I say single, because several trace attempts during the sme turn will kill the power of Phone Freak. Corp will have to think about using more [Blood Cat](#)... Despite its lower flexibility compared to [Signpost](#), Phone Freak seems better: no MU, cheap, no activation cost.

The only drawbacks of the card are few, but still there:

- first, the Corp can give tags without tracing ([City Surveillance](#), [Data Sifters](#)...); but in fact, this is just fortunate for the game and card balance that the Corp can give tags by several ways.
- second, in constructed format, the trace may not appear frequently, as most Corp will push fast advancement strategy, which is well known to be detrimental to the tag&bag side of the game (all cards in the deck are made for getting bits and scoring as fast as possible). This is of course not true in Sealed, where the card is very good.
- it will make [Hell's Run](#) instantly obsolete as Phone Freak is nothing less that three [Hell's Run](#) in one card

Note finally that as a connection costing 0, Phone Freak may be sensitive to card targeting that keyword (see my expansions), and can help the stupid (but powerful) poison BadPub deck ([Preying Mantis](#)+[Poison Water Supply](#)). Fortunately, that perverted deck is no longer possible in the Full Revised 3.0

Enjoy playing and testing this card, as there could many ways to use it not explained here. Who knows?

Playful\_EE